

## IX

Every light in the hall was ablaze; every lamp turned as high as it could be without smoking the chimney or threatening explosion. The lamps were fixed at intervals against the wall, encircling the whole room. Someone had gathered orange and lemon branches, and with these fashioned graceful festoons between. The dark green of the branches stood out and glistened against the white muslin curtains which draped the windows, and which puffed, floated, and flapped at the capricious will of a stiff breeze that swept up from the Gulf.

It was Saturday night a few weeks after the intimate conversation held between Robert and Madame Ratignolle on their way from the beach. An unusual number of husbands, fathers, and friends had come down to stay over Sunday; and they were being suitably entertained by their families, with the material help of Madame Lebrun. The dining tables had all been removed to one end of the hall, and the chairs ranged about in rows and in clusters. Each little family group had had its say and exchanged its domestic gossip earlier in the evening. There was now an apparent disposition to relax; to widen the circle of confidences and give a more general tone to the conversation.

Many of the children had been permitted to sit up beyond their usual bedtime. A small band of them were lying on their stomachs on the floor looking at the colored sheets of the comic papers which Mr. Pontellier had brought down. The little Pontellier boys were permitting them to do so, and making their authority felt.

Music, dancing, and a recitation or two were the entertainments furnished, or rather, offered. But there was nothing systematic about the programme, no appearance of prearrangement nor even premeditation.

At an early hour in the evening the Farival twins were prevailed upon to play the piano. They were girls of fourteen, always clad in the Virgin's colors, blue and white, having been dedicated to the Blessed Virgin at their baptism. They played a duet from "Zampa," and at the earnest solicitation of everyone present followed it with the overture to "The Poet and the Peasant."

"Allez vous-en! Sapristi!" shrieked the parrot outside the door. He was the only being present who possessed sufficient candor to admit that he was not listening to these gracious performances for the first time that summer. Old Monsieur Farival, grandfather of the twins, grew indignant over the interruption, and insisted upon having the bird removed and consigned to regions of darkness. Victor Lebrun objected; and his decrees were as immutable as those of Fate. The parrot fortunately offered no

Festive mood

Festive, cordial atmosphere

Read it against the grain: the program was so smoothly executed that it did not seem preplanned.

social niceties (saying polite things in a social setting): the Farival twins have been playing these same songs all summer!

Humorous tone

Indignant = offended  
Consign = to hand over = to put away

<p>further interruption to the entertainment, the whole venom of his nature apparently having been cherished up and hurled against the twins in that one impetuous outburst.</p> <p>Later a young brother and sister gave recitations, which everyone present had heard many times at winter evening entertainments in the city. A little girl performed a skirt dance in the center of the floor. The mother played her accompaniments and at the same time watched her daughter with greedy admiration and nervous apprehension. She need have had no apprehension. The child was mistress of the situation. She had been properly dressed for the occasion in black tulle and black silk tights. Her little neck and arms were bare, and her hair, artificially crimped, stood out like fluffy black plumes over her head. Her poses were full of grace, and her little black-shod toes twinkled as they shot out and upward with a rapidity and suddenness which were bewildering.</p> <p>But there was no reason why everyone should not dance. Madame Ratignolle could not, so it was she who gaily consented to play for the others. She played very well, keeping excellent waltz time and infusing an expression into the strains which was indeed inspiring. <b>She was keeping up her music on account of the children</b>, she said; because she and her husband both considered it a means of brightening the home and making it attractive.</p> <p>Almost everyone danced but the twins, who could not be induced to separate during the brief period when one or the other should be whirling around the room in the arms of a man. They might have danced together, but they did not think of it.</p> <p>The children were sent to bed. Some went submissively; others with shrieks and protests as they were dragged away. They had been permitted to sit up till after the ice-cream, which <b>naturally marked the limit of human indulgence</b>.</p> <p>The ice-cream was passed around with cake—gold and silver cake arranged on platters in alternate slices; it had been made and frozen during the afternoon back of the kitchen by two black women, under the supervision of Victor. It was <b>pronounced a great success—excellent if it had only contained a little less vanilla or a little more sugar, if it had been frozen a degree harder, and if the salt might have been kept out of portions of it</b>. Victor was proud of his achievement, and went about recommending it and urging everyone to partake of it to excess.</p> <p>After Mrs. Pontellier had danced twice with her husband, once with Robert, and once with Monsieur Ratignolle, who was thin and tall and swayed like a reed in the wind when he danced, she went out on the gallery and seated herself on the low windowsill, where she commanded a view of all that went on in the hall and could look out toward the Gulf.</p>	<p>Immutable = unchangeable</p> <p>Recitation = oral delivery</p> <p>Apprehension = anxiety</p> <p>Madame Ratignolle may be a talented pianist, but she is content to use her talent as a tool to entertain her children.</p> <p>The twins may live their entire lives following norms dictated by others.</p> <p>Ice-cream is the last treat of the day.</p> <p>Backhanded compliment</p>
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There was a soft effulgence in the east. The moon was coming up, and its mystic shimmer was casting a million lights across the distant, restless water.

“Would you like to hear Mademoiselle Reisz play?” asked Robert, coming out on the porch where she was. Of course Edna would like to hear Mademoiselle Reisz play; but she feared it would be useless to entreat her.

“I’ll ask her,” he said. “I’ll tell her that you want to hear her. She likes you. She will come.” He turned and hurried away to one of the far cottages, where Mademoiselle Reisz was shuffling away. She was dragging a chair in and out of her room, and at intervals objecting to the crying of a baby, which a nurse in the adjoining cottage was endeavoring to put to sleep. She was a disagreeable little woman, no longer young, who had quarreled with almost everyone, owing to a temper which was self-assertive and a disposition to trample upon the rights of others. Robert prevailed upon her without any too great difficulty.

She entered the hall with him during a lull in the dance. She made an awkward, imperious little bow as she went in. She was a homely woman, with a small wizened face and body and eyes that glowed. She had absolutely no taste in dress, and wore a batch of rusty black lace with a bunch of artificial violets pinned to the side of her hair.

“Ask Mrs. Pontellier what she would like to hear me play,” she requested of Robert. She sat perfectly still before the piano, not touching the keys, while Robert carried her message to Edna at the window. A general air of surprise and genuine satisfaction fell upon everyone as they saw the pianist enter. There was a settling down, and a prevailing air of expectancy everywhere. Edna was a trifle embarrassed at being thus signaled out for the imperious little woman’s favor. She would not dare to choose and begged that Mademoiselle Reisz would please herself in her selections.

Edna was what she herself called very fond of music. Musical strains, well rendered, had a way of evoking pictures in her mind. She sometimes liked to sit in the room of mornings when Madame Ratignolle played or practiced. One piece which that lady played Edna had entitled “Solitude.”

It was a short, plaintive, minor strain. The name of the piece was something else, but she called it “Solitude.” When she heard it there came before her imagination the figure of a man standing beside a desolate rock on the seashore. He was naked. His attitude was one of hopeless resignation as he looked toward a distant bird winging its flight away from him.

Another piece called to her mind a dainty young woman clad in an Empire gown, taking mincing dancing steps as she came down a long avenue between tall hedges. Again, another reminded her of children at play, and still another of nothing on earth but a demure lady stroking a cat. The very

Effulgence = radiance  
Visual imagery of the sea under the moon

Mademoiselle = a term of respect for an unmarried woman  
M. Reisz is a testy, eccentric person.

Imperious = arrogant = overbearing  
Wizen = to dry = to shrink  
How does the author use diction and specific details to portray M. Reisz’s character?

M. Reisz is a well-known pianist.

Music uses auditory imagery whereas painting uses visual imagery: both art forms carry sensory messages.

Why did Edna imagine a solitary, naked man when she heard Madame Ratignolle play “Solitude”? What does the flying bird symbolize?

first chords which Mademoiselle Reisz struck upon the piano sent a keen tremor down Mrs. Pontellier's spinal column. It was not the first time she had heard an artist at the piano. Perhaps it was the first time she was ready, perhaps the first time her being was tempered to take an impress of the abiding truth.

She waited for the material pictures which she thought would gather and blaze before her imagination. She waited in vain. She saw no pictures of solitude, of hope, of longing, or of despair. But the very passions themselves were aroused within her soul, swaying it, lashing it, as the waves daily beat upon her splendid body. She trembled, she was choking, and the tears blinded her.

Mademoiselle had finished. She arose, and bowing her stiff, lofty bow, she went away, stopping for neither, thanks nor applause. As she passed along the gallery she patted Edna upon the shoulder.

"Well, how did you like my music?" she asked. The young woman was unable to answer; she pressed the hand of the pianist convulsively. Mademoiselle Reisz perceived her agitation and even her tears. She patted her again upon the shoulder as she said: "You are the only one worth playing for. Those others? Bah!" and she went shuffling and sidling on down the gallery toward her room.

But she was mistaken about "those others." Her playing had aroused a fever of enthusiasm. "What passion!" "What an artist!" "I have always said no one could play Chopin like Mademoiselle Reisz!" "That last prelude! *Bon Dieu!* It shakes a man!"

It was growing late, and there was a general disposition to disband. But someone, perhaps it was Robert, thought of a bath at that mystic hour and under that mystic moon.

## X

At all events Robert proposed it, and there was not a dissenting voice. There was not one but was ready to follow when he led the way. He did not lead the way; however, he directed the way; and he himself loitered behind with the lovers, who had betrayed a disposition to linger and hold themselves apart. He walked between them, whether with malicious or mischievous intent was not wholly clear, even to himself.

The Pontelliers and Ratignolles walked ahead; the women leaning upon the arms of their husbands. Edna could hear Robert's voice behind them and could sometimes hear what he said. She wondered why he did not join them. It was unlike him not to. Of late he had sometimes held away from her for an entire day, redoubling his devotion upon the next and the next, as though to make up for hours that had been lost. She missed him the days

M. Ratignolle's music makes Edna think about others; on the contrary, M. Reisz's music forces Edna to introspect.

Abiding truth about herself = Edna's identity

Edna's artistic awakening

The phrase "stiff, lofty bow" mirrors the diction of "awkward, imperious" used earlier.

M. Reisz played this song specifically for Edna.

*Bon dieu* = good god!  
Can a female artist have such a power to shake a man?

Dissent = to disagree = to differ  
Not one but = not one that was not . . .  
i.e.) everybody was ready to go swimming.  
Betray = to reveal = to let slip  
Robert is jealous of the lovers.

Robert plays hot and cold with Edna despite himself.

when some pretext served to take him away from her, just as one misses the sun on a cloudy day without having thought much about the sun when it was shining.

The people walked in little groups toward the beach. They talked and laughed; some of them sang. There was a band playing down at Klein's hotel, and the strains reached them faintly, tempered by the distance. There were strange, rare odors abroad—a tangle of the sea smell and of weeds and damp, new-plowed earth, mingled with the heavy perfume of a field of white blossoms somewhere near. But the night sat lightly upon the sea and the land. There was no weight of darkness; there were no shadows.

The white light of the moon had fallen upon the world like the mystery and the softness of sleep. Most of them walked into the water as though into a native element. The sea was quiet now and swelled lazily in broad billows that melted into one another and did not break except upon the beach in little foamy crests that coiled back like slow, white serpents.

Edna had attempted all summer to learn to swim. She had received instructions from both the men and women; in some instances from the children. Robert had pursued a system of lessons almost daily; and he was nearly at the point of discouragement in realizing the futility of his efforts. A certain ungovernable dread hung about her when in the water, unless there was a hand nearby that might reach out and reassure her.

But that night she was like the little tottering, stumbling, clutching child, who of a sudden realizes its powers, and walks for the first time alone, boldly and with over-confidence. She could have shouted for joy. She did shout for joy, as with a sweeping stroke or two she lifted her body to the surface of the water.

A feeling of exultation overtook her, as if some power of significant import had been given her to control the working of her body and her soul. She grew daring and reckless, overestimating her strength. She wanted to swim far out, where no woman had swum before. Her unlooked-for achievement was the subject of wonder, applause, and admiration. Each one congratulated himself that his special teachings had accomplished this desired end.

"How easy it is!" she thought. "It is nothing," she said aloud; "why did I not discover before that it was nothing. Think of the time I have lost splashing about like a baby!" She would not join the groups in their sports and bouts, but intoxicated with her newly conquered power, she swam out alone. She turned her face seaward to gather in an impression of space and solitude, which the vast expanse of water, meeting and melting with the moonlit sky, conveyed to her excited fancy. As she swam, she seemed to be reaching out for the unlimited in which to lose herself.

Pretext = excuse  
Edna "got Robert under her skin."

Temper = to alter = to tone down  
A plethora of sensory inputs

The light is "white" and at the same time "soft." The author melds visual imagery and textile imagery to create a palpable experience Edna is going through.

Synesthesia

Inner fear or dependency has a hold on her.

Edna is compared to a "tottering" little one. Symbolically speaking, Edna is reborn when she learns how to swim (that is, how to be) independently.

Men credit themselves as the authority of Edna's new-found skills.

Foreshadowing

Once she turned and looked toward the shore, toward the people she had left there. She had not gone any great distance that is, what would have been a great distance for an experienced swimmer. But to her unaccustomed vision the stretch of water behind her assumed the aspect of a barrier which her unaided strength would never be able to overcome.

A quick vision of death smote her soul, and for a second of time appalled and enfeebled her senses. But by an effort she rallied her staggering faculties and managed to regain the land. She made no mention of her encounter with death and her flash of terror, except to say to her husband, "I thought I should have perished out there alone."

"You were not so very far, my dear; I was watching you," he told her.

Edna went at once to the bathhouse, and she had put on her dry clothes and was ready to return home before the others had left the water. She started to walk away alone. They all called to her and shouted to her. She waved a dissenting hand, and went on, paying no further heed to their renewed cries which sought to detain her.

"Sometimes I am tempted to think that Mrs. Pontellier is capricious," said Madame Lebrun, who was amusing herself immensely and feared that Edna's abrupt departure might put an end to the pleasure.

"I know she is," assented Mr. Pontellier; "sometimes, not often."

Edna had not traversed a quarter of the distance on her way home before she was overtaken by Robert.

"Did you think I was afraid?" she asked him, without a shade of annoyance.

"No; I knew you weren't afraid."

"Then why did you come? Why didn't you stay out there with the others?"

"I never thought of it."

"Thought of what?"

"Of anything. What difference does it make?"

"I'm very tired," she uttered, complainingly.

"I know you are."

"You don't know anything about it. Why should you know? I never was so exhausted in my life. But it isn't unpleasant. A thousand emotions have swept through me to-night. I don't comprehend half of them. Don't mind

Capricious = changeable = unstable

Litotes  
Isn't unpleasant = very pleasant

<p>what I'm saying; I am just thinking aloud. I wonder if I shall ever be stirred again as Mademoiselle Reisz's playing moved me to-night. I wonder if any night on earth will ever again be like this one. It is like a night in a dream. The people about me are like some uncanny, half-human beings. There must be spirits abroad to-night."</p> <p>"There are," whispered Robert, "Didn't you know this was the twenty-eighth of August?"</p> <p>"The twenty-eighth of August?"</p> <p>"Yes. On the twenty-eighth of August, at the hour of midnight, and if the moon is shining—the moon must be shining—a spirit that has haunted these shores for ages rises up from the Gulf. With its own penetrating vision, the spirit seeks someone mortal worthy to hold him company, worthy of being exalted for a few hours into realms of the semi-celestials.</p> <p>His search has always hitherto been fruitless, and he has sunk back, disheartened, into the sea. But tonight, he found Mrs. Pontellier. Perhaps he will never wholly release her from the spell. Perhaps she will never again suffer a poor, unworthy earthling to walk in the shadow of her divine presence."</p> <p>"Don't banter me," she said, wounded at what appeared to be his flippancy.</p> <p>He did not mind the entreaty, but the tone with its delicate note of pathos was like a reproach. He could not explain; he could not tell her that he had penetrated her mood and understood. He said nothing except to offer her his arm, for, by her own admission, she was exhausted. She had been walking alone with her arms hanging limp, letting her white skirts trail along the dewy path. She took his arm, but she did not lean upon it. She let her hand lie listlessly, as though her thoughts were elsewhere—somewhere in advance of her body, and she was striving to overtake them.</p> <p>Robert assisted her into the hammock which swung from the post before her door out to the trunk of a tree.</p> <p>"Will you stay out here and wait for Mr. Pontellier?" he asked.</p> <p>"I'll stay out here. Good-night."</p> <p>"Shall I get you a pillow?"</p> <p>"There's one here," she said, feeling about, for they were in the shadow.</p> <p>"It must be soiled; the children have been tumbling it about."</p>	<p>Uncanny = supernatural = strange</p> <p>Robert's diction is full of magical fantasy.</p> <p>Flippancy = light-heartedness</p> <p>Listless = sluggish</p>
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<p>“No matter.” And having discovered the pillow, she adjusted it beneath her head. She extended herself in the hammock with a deep breath of relief. She was not a supercilious or an over-dainty woman. She was not much given to reclining in the hammock, and when she did so it was with no cat-like suggestion of voluptuous ease, but with a beneficent repose which seemed to invade her whole body.</p> <p>“Shall I stay with you till Mr. Pontellier comes?” asked Robert, seating himself on the outer edge of one of the steps and taking hold of the hammock rope which was fastened to the post.</p> <p>“If you wish. Don’t swing the hammock. Will you get my white shawl which I left on the window-sill over at the house?”</p> <p>“Are you chilly?”</p> <p>“No; but I shall be presently.”</p> <p>“Presently?” he laughed. “Do you know what time it is? How long are you going to stay out here?”</p> <p>“I don’t know. Will you get the shawl?”</p> <p>“Of course, I will,” he said, rising. He went over to the house, walking along the grass. She watched his figure pass in and out of the strips of moonlight. It was past midnight. It was very quiet.</p> <p>When he returned with the shawl, she took it and kept it in her hand. She did not put it around her.</p> <p>“Did you say I should stay till Mr. Pontellier came back?”</p> <p>“I said you might if you wished to.”</p> <p>He seated himself again and rolled a cigarette, which he smoked in silence. Neither did Mrs. Pontellier speak. <b>No</b> multitude of words could have been <b>more</b> significant <b>than</b> those moments of silence, or more pregnant with the first-felt throbbings of desire.</p> <p>When the voices of the bathers were heard approaching, Robert said good-night. She did not answer him. He thought she was asleep. <b>Again she watched his figure pass in and out of the strips of moonlight as he walked away.</b></p>	<p>Repose = poise = peace</p> <p>Presently = soon = immediately</p> <p>The use of the superlative degree emphasizes how meaningful the moment of silence is to both characters. Pregnant = full of meaning</p> <p>Edna experiences a romantic awakening.</p>
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## XI

“What are you doing out here, Edna? I thought I should find you in bed,” said her husband, when he discovered her lying there. He had walked up with Madame Lebrun and left her at the house. His wife did not reply.

“Are you asleep?” he asked, bending down close to look at her.

“No.” Her eyes gleamed bright and intense, with no sleepy shadows, as they looked into his.

“Do you know it is past one o’clock? Come on,” and he mounted the steps and went into their room.

“Edna!” called Mr. Pontellier from within, after a few moments had gone by.

“Don’t wait for me,” she answered. He thrust his head through the door.

“You will take cold out there,” he said, irritably. “What folly is this? Why don’t you come in?”

“It isn’t cold; I have my shawl.”

“The mosquitoes will devour you.”

“There are no mosquitoes.”

She heard him moving about the room; every sound indicating impatience and irritation. Another time she would have gone in at his request. She would, through habit, have yielded to his desire; not with any sense of submission or obedience to his compelling wishes, but unthinkingly, as we walk, move, sit, stand, go through the daily treadmill of the life which has been portioned out to us.

“Edna, dear, are you not coming in soon?” he asked again, this time fondly, with a note of entreaty.

“No; I am going to stay out here.”

“This is more than folly,” he blurted out. “I can’t permit you to stay out there all night. You must come in the house instantly.”

With a writhing motion she settled herself more securely in the hammock. She perceived that her will had blazed up, stubborn and resistant. She could not at that moment have done other than denied and resisted. She wondered if her husband had ever spoken to her like that before, and if she had submitted to his command. Of course, she had; she remembered that she

Diction that conveys confidence and defiance

Edna chooses not to comply with Leonce’s wishes and orders.

had. But she could not realize why or how she should have yielded, feeling as she then did.

“Leonce, go to bed,” she said “I mean to stay out here. I don’t wish to go in, and I don’t intend to. **Don’t speak to me like that again; I shall not answer you.**”

Mr. Pontellier had prepared for bed, but he slipped on an extra garment. He opened a bottle of wine, of which he kept a small and select supply in a buffet of his own. He drank a glass of the wine and went out on the gallery and offered a glass to his wife. She did not wish any. He drew up the rocker, hoisted his slippered feet on the rail, and proceeded to smoke a cigar. He smoked two cigars; then he went inside and drank another glass of wine. Mrs. Pontellier again declined to accept a glass when it was offered to her. Mr. Pontellier once more seated himself with elevated feet, and after a reasonable interval of time smoked some more cigars.

**Edna began to feel like one who awakens gradually out of a dream, a delicious, grotesque, impossible dream, to feel again the realities pressing into her soul.** The physical need for sleep began to overtake her; the exuberance which had sustained and exalted her spirit left her helpless and yielding to the conditions which crowded her in.

The stillest hour of the night had come, **the hour before dawn, when the world seems to hold its breath.** The moon hung low and had turned from silver to copper in the sleeping sky. The old owl no longer hooted, and the water-oaks had ceased to moan as they bent their heads.

Edna arose, cramped from lying so long and still in the hammock. She tottered up the steps, clutching feebly at the post before passing into the house.

“Are you coming in, Leonce?” she asked, turning her face toward her husband.

“Yes, dear,” he answered, with a glance following a misty puff of smoke. “Just as soon as I have finished my cigar.”

## XII

She slept but a few hours. They were troubled and feverish hours, disturbed with dreams that were intangible, that eluded her, leaving only an impression upon her half-awakened senses of something unattainable. She was up and dressed in the cool of the early morning. The air was invigorating and steadied somewhat her faculties. However, she was not seeking refreshment or help from any source, either external or from within. **She was blindly following whatever impulse moved her, as if she had**

Exuberance = energy and vitality

Personification

What a long night!  
Chapters 9-11 happen on one Saturday night.

When repression is lifted with her revolt, Edna is guided by impulses.

placed herself in alien hands for direction and freed her soul of responsibility.

Most of the people at that early hour were still in bed and asleep. A few, who intended to go over to the Cheniere for mass, were moving about. **The lovers**, who had laid their plans the night before, were already strolling toward the wharf. **The lady in black**, with her Sunday prayer-book, velvet and gold-clasped, and her Sunday silver beads, was following them **at no great distance**. Old Monsieur Farival was up and was more than half inclined to do anything that suggested itself. He put on his big straw hat, and taking his umbrella from the stand in the hall, followed the lady in black, never overtaking her.

The little negro girl who worked Madame Lebrun's sewing-machine was sweeping the galleries with long, absent-minded strokes of the broom. Edna sent her up into the house to awaken Robert.

"Tell him I am going to the Cheniere. The boat is ready; tell him to hurry."

He had soon joined her. She had never sent for him before. She had never asked for him. She had never seemed to want him before. She did not appear conscious that she had done anything unusual in commanding his presence. He was apparently equally unconscious of anything extraordinary in the situation. But his face was suffused with a quiet glow when he met her.

They went together back to the kitchen to drink coffee. There was no time to wait for any nicety of service. They stood outside the window and the cook passed them their coffee and a roll, which they drank and ate from the windowsill. Edna said it tasted good. She had not thought of coffee nor of anything. **He told her he had often noticed that she lacked forethought.**

"Wasn't it enough to think of going to the Cheniere and waking you up?" she laughed. "Do I have to think of everything?—as Leonce says when he's in a bad humor. I don't blame him; he'd never be in a bad humor if it weren't for me."

They took a short cut across the sands. At a distance they could see the curious procession moving toward the wharf—the lovers, shoulder to shoulder, creeping; the lady in black, gaining steadily upon them; old Monsieur Farival, losing ground inch by inch, and a young barefooted Spanish girl, with a red kerchief on her head and a basket on her arm, bringing up the rear.

Robert knew the girl, and he talked to her a little in the boat. No one present understood what they said. Her name was Mariequita. She had a round, sly, piquant face and pretty black eyes. Her hands were small, and she kept them folded over the handle of her basket. Her feet were broad and coarse. She

Litotes

At no great distance = close by

Edna asks Robert to accompany her to the nearby island.

Suffuse = to flood over

Nicety = polite social interaction

Robert says Edna is impulsive.

Piquant = spicy; sharp; attractive

did not strive to hide them. Edna looked at her feet and noticed the sand and slime between her brown toes.

Beaudelet grumbled because Mariequita was there, taking up so much room. In reality, he was annoyed at having old Monsieur Farival, who considered himself the better sailor of the two. But he would not quarrel with so old a man as Monsieur Farival, so he quarreled with Mariequita.

The girl was deprecatory at one moment, appealing to Robert. She was saucy the next, moving her head up and down, making “eyes” at Robert and making “mouths” at Beaudelet. The lovers were all alone. They saw nothing, they heard nothing. The lady in black was counting her beads for the third time. Old Monsieur Farival talked incessantly of what he knew about handling a boat, and of what Beaudelet did not know on the same subject.

Edna liked it all. She looked Mariequita up and down, from her ugly brown toes to her pretty black eyes, and back again.

“Why does she look at me like that?” inquired the girl of Robert.

“Maybe she thinks you are pretty. Shall I ask her?”

“No. Is she your sweetheart?”

“She’s a married lady and has two children.”

“Oh! well! Francisco ran away with Sylvano’s wife, who had four children. They took all his money and one of the children and stole his boat.”

“Shut up!”

“Does she understand?”

“Oh, hush!”

“Are those two married over there—leaning on each other?”

“Of course not,” laughed Robert.

“Of course not,” echoed Mariequita, with a serious, confirmatory bob of the head.

The sun was high up and beginning to bite. The swift breeze seemed to Edna to bury the sting of it into the pores of her face and hands. Robert held his umbrella over her. As they went cutting sidewise through the water, **the sails bellied taut, with the wind filling and overflowing them.**

Deprecatory = expressing disapproval

Saucy = rude and sassy

Incessant = continuous = not stopping

Ah ha, “the lovers” were enjoying their extramarital affair!

In Mariequita’s eyes, Robert and Edna are already lovers.

Visual imagery that implies the swelling expectation of what to come

Sardonic = sarcastic

Old Monsieur Farival laughed sardonically at something as he looked at the sails, and Beaufort swore at the old man under his breath. Sailing across the bay to the Cheniere Caminada, Edna felt as if she were being borne away from some anchorage which had held her fast, whose chains had been loosening—had snapped the night before when the mystic spirit was abroad, leaving her free to drift whithersoever she chose to set her sails. Robert spoke to her incessantly; he no longer noticed Mariequita. The girl had shrimps in her bamboo basket. They were covered with Spanish moss. She beat the moss down impatiently and muttered to herself sullenly.

“Let us go to Grande Terre to-morrow?” said Robert in a low voice.

“What shall we do there?”

“Climb up the hill to the old fort and look at the little wriggling gold snakes and watch the lizards sun themselves.”

She gazed away toward Grande Terre and thought she would like to be alone there with Robert, in the sun, listening to the ocean’s roar and watching the slimy lizards writhe in and out among the ruins of the old fort.

“And the next day or the next we can sail to the Bayou Brulow,” he went on.

“What shall we do there?”

“Anything—cast bait for fish.”

“No; we’ll go back to Grande Terre. Let the fish alone.”

“We’ll go wherever you like,” he said. “I’ll have Tonie come over and help me patch and trim my boat. We shall not need Beaufort nor anyone. Are you afraid of the pirogue?”

“Oh, no.”

“Then I’ll take you some night in the pirogue when the moon shines. Maybe your Gulf spirit will whisper to you in which of these islands the treasures are hidden—direct you to the very spot, perhaps.”

“And in a day we should be rich!” she laughed. “I’d give it all to you, the pirate gold and every bit of treasure we could dig up. I think you would know how to spend it. Pirate gold isn’t a thing to be hoarded or utilized. It is something to squander and throw to the four winds, for the fun of seeing the golden specks fly.”

“We’d share it, and scatter it together,” he said. His face flushed. They all went together up to the quaint little Gothic church of Our Lady of Lourdes,

Pirogue = a canoe

Robert and Edna banter and talk about fantasy and adventures.

Is Mariequita jealous?

gleaming all brown and yellow with paint in the sun's glare. Only Beaudet remained behind, tinkering at his boat, and Mariequita walked away with her basket of shrimps, casting a look of childish ill humor and reproach at Robert from the corner of her eye.

### XIII

A feeling of oppression and drowsiness overcame Edna during the service. Her head began to ache, and the lights on the altar swayed before her eyes. Another time she might have made an effort to regain her composure; but her one thought was to quit **the stifling atmosphere of the church** and reach the open air. She arose, climbing over Robert's feet with a muttered apology. Old Monsieur Farival, flurried, curious, stood up, but upon seeing that Robert had followed Mrs. Pontellier, he sank back into his seat. He whispered an anxious inquiry of the lady in black, who did not notice him or reply, but kept her eyes fastened upon the pages of her velvet prayer-book.

"I felt giddy and almost overcome," Edna said, lifting her hands instinctively to her head and pushing her straw hat up from her forehead. "I couldn't have stayed through the service." They were outside in the shadow of the church. Robert was full of solicitude.

"It was folly to have thought of going in the first place, let alone staying. Come over to Madame Antoine's; you can rest there." He took her arm and led her away, looking anxiously and continuously down into her face.

How still it was, with only the voice of the sea whispering through the reeds that grew in the salt-water pools! The long line of little gray, weather-beaten houses nestled peacefully among the orange trees. It must always have been God's day on that low, drowsy island, Edna thought. They stopped, leaning over a jagged fence made of sea-drift, to ask for water. A youth, a mild-faced Acadian, was drawing water from the cistern, which was nothing more than a rusty buoy, with an opening on one side, sunk in the ground. The water which the youth handed to them in a tin pail was not cold to taste, but it was cool to her heated face, and it greatly revived and refreshed her.

Madame Antoine's cot was at the far end of the village. She welcomed them with all the native hospitality, as she would have opened her door to let the sunlight in. She was fat and walked heavily and clumsily across the floor. She could speak no English, but when Robert made her understand that the lady who accompanied him was ill and desired to rest, she was all eagerness to make Edna feel at home and to dispose of her comfortably.

The whole place was immaculately clean, and the big, four-posted bed, snow-white, invited one to repose. It stood in a small side room which looked out across a narrow grass plot toward the shed, where there was a disabled boat lying keel upward.

Is religion suffocating Edna or is she simply exhausted?

Solicitude = concern and care

Madame Antoine's cottage: the haven for the couple

Immaculate = spotless = clean

Madame Antoine had not gone to mass. Her son Tonie had, but she supposed he would soon be back, and she invited Robert to be seated and wait for him. But he went and sat outside the door and smoked. Madame Antoine busied herself in the large front room preparing dinner. She was boiling mullets over a few red coals in the huge fireplace.

Edna, left alone in the little side room, loosened her clothes, removing the greater part of them. She bathed her face, her neck and arms in the basin that stood between the windows. She took off her shoes and stockings and stretched herself in the very center of the high, white bed. How luxurious it felt to rest thus in a strange, quaint bed, with its sweet country odor of laurel lingering about the sheets and mattress! She stretched her strong limbs that ached a little. She ran her fingers through her loosened hair for a while. She looked at her round arms as she held them straight up and rubbed them one after the other, observing closely, as if it were something she saw for the first time, the fine, firm quality and texture of her flesh. She clasped her hands easily above her head, and it was thus she fell asleep.

She slept lightly at first, half awake and drowsily attentive to the things about her. She could hear Madame Antoine's heavy, scraping tread as she walked back and forth on the sanded floor. Some chickens were clucking outside the windows, scratching for bits of gravel in the grass. Later she half heard the voices of Robert and Tonie talking under the shed. She did not stir. Even her eyelids rested numb and heavily over her sleepy eyes.

The voices went on—Tonie's slow, Acadian drawl, Robert's quick, soft, smooth French. She understood French imperfectly unless directly addressed, and the voices were only part of the other drowsy, muffled sounds lulling her senses.

When Edna awoke it was with the conviction that she had slept long and soundly. The voices were hushed under the shed. Madame Antoine's step was no longer to be heard in the adjoining room. Even the chickens had gone elsewhere to scratch and cluck. The mosquito bar was drawn over her; the old woman had come in while she slept and let down the bar.

Edna arose quietly from the bed, and looking between the curtains of the window, she saw by the slanting rays of the sun that the afternoon was far advanced. Robert was out there under the shed, reclining in the shade against the sloping keel of the overturned boat. He was reading from a book. Tonie was no longer with him. She wondered what had become of the rest of the party. She peeped out at him two or three times as she stood washing herself in the little basin between the windows.

Madame Antoine had laid some coarse, clean towels upon a chair, and had placed a box of *poudre de riz* within easy reach. Edna dabbed the powder upon her nose and cheeks as she looked at herself closely in the little

*Poudre de riz*: face powder

distorted mirror which hung on the wall above the basin. Her eyes were bright and wide awake and her face glowed.

When she had completed her toilet she walked into the adjoining room. She was very hungry. No one was there. But there was a cloth spread upon the table that stood against the wall, and a cover was laid for one, with a crusty brown loaf and a bottle of wine beside the plate. Edna bit a piece from the brown loaf, tearing it with her strong, white teeth. She poured some of the wine into the glass and drank it down. Then she went softly out of doors and plucking an orange from the low-hanging bough of a tree, threw it at Robert, who did not know she was awake and up.

An illumination broke over his whole face when he saw her and joined her under the orange tree.

“How many years have I slept?” she inquired. “The whole island seems changed. A new race of beings must have sprung up, leaving only you and me as past relics. How many ages ago did Madame Antoine and Tonie die? and when did our people from Grand Isle disappear from the earth?”

He familiarly adjusted a ruffle upon her shoulder.

“You have slept precisely one hundred years. I was left here to guard your slumbers; and for one hundred years I have been out under the shed reading a book. The only evil I couldn’t prevent was to keep a broiled fowl from drying up.”

“If it has turned to stone, still will I eat it,” said Edna, moving with him into the house. “But really, what has become of Monsieur Farival and the others?”

“Gone hours ago. When they found that you were sleeping they thought it best not to awake you. Anyway, I wouldn’t have let them. What was I here for?”

“I wonder if Leonce will be uneasy!” she speculated, as she seated herself at table.

“Of course not; he knows you are with me,” Robert replied, as he busied himself among sundry pans and covered dishes which had been left standing on the hearth.

“Where are Madame Antoine and her son?” asked Edna.

“Gone to Vespers, and to visit some friends, I believe. I am to take you back in Tonie’s boat whenever you are ready to go.”



<p>He stirred the smoldering ashes till the broiled fowl began to sizzle afresh. He served her with no mean repast, dripping the coffee anew and sharing it with her. Madame Antoine had cooked little else than the mullets, but while Edna slept Robert had foraged the island. He was childishly gratified to discover her appetite, and to see the relish with which she ate the food which he had procured for her.</p> <p>“Shall we go right away?” she asked, after draining her glass and brushing together the crumbs of the crusty loaf.</p> <p>“The sun isn’t as low as it will be in two hours,” he answered.</p> <p>“The sun will be gone in two hours.”</p> <p>“Well, let it go; who cares!”</p> <p>They waited a good while under the orange trees, till Madame Antoine came back, panting, waddling, with a thousand apologies to explain her absence. Tonie did not dare to return. He was shy and would not willingly face any woman except his mother.</p> <p>It was very pleasant to stay there under the orange trees, while the sun dipped lower and lower, turning the western sky to flaming copper and gold. The shadows lengthened and crept out like stealthy, grotesque monsters across the grass.</p> <p>Edna and Robert both sat upon the ground—that is, he lay upon the ground beside her, occasionally picking at the hem of her muslin gown. Madame Antoine seated her fat body, broad and squat, upon a bench beside the door. She had been talking all the afternoon and had wound herself up to the storytelling pitch.</p> <p>And what stories she told them! But twice in her life she had left the Cheniere Caminada, and then for the briefest span. All her years she had squatted and waddled there upon the island, gathering legends of the Baratarians and the sea. The night came on, with the moon to lighten it.</p> <p>Edna could hear the whispering voices of dead men and the click of muffled gold. When she and Robert stepped into Tonie’s boat, with the red lateen sail, misty spirit forms were prowling in the shadows and among the reeds, and upon the water were phantom ships, speeding to cover.</p>	<p>Repast = meal Mullet = fish Forage = to hunt for food</p> <p>Barataria Bay was pirates’ base.</p> <p>Edna and Robert have a magical boat ride back to Grand Isle.</p>
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